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Health, safety tips posted for Olympics visitors

VANCOUVER 2010 Games

LIST Don't smoke on patios or drink directly from streams, health officials are warning Vancouver's Olympic visitors.

Vancouver Coastal Health has posted a short list of travel safety tips for visitors to Vancouver during the 2010 Games.

In it, the health authority urges visitors to wash their hands after using the toilet or before touching food.

They also remind visitors that in B.C. smoking is prohibited on patios or near doorways and to avoid drinking from streams when hiking or skiing, as the water could contain giardia or cryptosporidium.

METRO VANCOUVER

News on the Move

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Celebrity Buzz pg 26

Jonas bro says 'I do' at castle

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MAX NASH/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. actress Brittany Murphy arrives in Leicester Square in 2006 for the European première of her film Happy Feet in central London. The 32-year-old died yesterday morning.

Murphy dead at 32

Clueless, 8 Mile star's death 'appears to be natural': Coroner

Brittany Murphy, the actress who got her start in the sleeper hit Clueless and rose to stardom in 8 Mile before her movie roles declined in recent years, died yesterday in Los Angeles of what appeared to be natural causes, a Los Angeles County coroner's official said. She was 32.

Murphy was pronounced dead at 10:04 a.m. at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, hospital spokeswoman Sally Stewart said.

Murphy was transported to the hospital after the Los Angeles Fire Department responded to a call at 8 a.m. at the home she shared with her husband, British screenwriter Simon Monjack, in the Hollywood Hills.

Assistant Chief Coroner Ed Winter said Murphy apparently collapsed in the bathroom, and authorities were looking into her medical history.

An official cause of death may not be determined for some time, since toxicology tests will be required, but "it appears to be natural," Winter said. He said an autopsy was planned for today or tomorrow. Winter said Murphy's family was co-operating with the coroner's investigation.

L.A. police have opened an investigation into Murphy's death, Officer Norma Eisenman said. Detectives and coroner's officials were at Murphy and Monjack's home yesterday afternoon.

Neighbour Clare Staples said she saw firefighters working to resuscitate the actress yesterday morning. She said Murphy was on a stretcher and "looked as though she was dead at the scene."

Murphy's husband, wearing pajama bottoms and no shoes, appeared "dazed" as firefighters tried to save her, Staples said. "It's just tragic," she added.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Actress

- Born Nov. 10, 1977, in Atlanta, Murphy grew up in New Jersey and later moved with her mother to Los Angeles to pursue acting.

Crime rates could actually drop during Games: Expert

VANCOUVER 2010 Games

Vancouver residents shouldn't expect an Olympian crime wave when the Winter Games arrive in the city, says a criminologist who's studied crime rates in host cities.

Scott Decker, director of Arizona State University's criminology school, says there's evidence crime rates actually fall during the Olympics.

He co-authored a study on routine policing during the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Games and found no significant uptick in police calls, and arrests were actually down.

However, Decker says with many local officers doing Olympic security duty, it can take longer for police to respond to a call.

Decker's views are echoed by Vancouver police spokesman Const. Lindsay Houghton.

He and the RCMP, however, say they have enough officers and the heavy and highly visible police presence should make streets safer.

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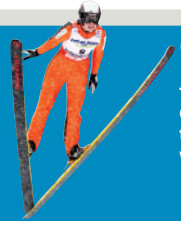

73% disagree with ski-jumping decision

The majority of Canadians, 73 per cent, disagree with the decision of the International Olympic Committee to keep women's ski jumping out of the Vancouver Olympics, according to an Angus Reid poll. However, more than half of Canadians still want the men to ski jump, with 55 per cent opposing cancelling the men's competition because women aren't included.

METRO VANCOUVER

METRO INTERNATIONAL NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR
2009 Festival of Media Awards

News in brief

FIRE Police are investigating a massive fire that destroyed a hangar at Prince George's airport. No one was injured when the Northern Thunderbird Air hangar went up in flames Saturday. There were no planes inside at the time and no cause has been determined yet.

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WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Immigration Guidy Mamann has the story of a young immigrant caught between two agencies at **metronews.ca/immigration**

Lotteries

Friday, Dec. 18
Lotto Max: 8, 10, 15, 17, 33, 34 & 35 Bonus 13
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These results are not official.

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Late shoppers soldier on

KRISTEN THOMPSON
kristen.thompson@metronews.ca

It may have been the rain, the economy or that people don't procrastinate as much as you'd think, but the streets of downtown Vancouver were relatively quiet yesterday given that it was the Sunday before Christmas.

Despite the not-so-busy malls and streets, some last-minute shoppers were out trying to get through their shopping lists.

Jessica Hurtubise was kept busy with exams at the University of Victoria and didn't find time to shop until yesterday.

"Usually by the time you're doing last-minute shopping, everything you want is sold out," she said.

Last year, her dad wanted earmuffs with a radio in them, but Hurtubise took so long that they were sold out and she had to settle for an MP3 player.

"He opened it and asked, 'Did you keep the receipt?' and took it back and bought the earmuffs," she said.

Tasha Lorenzen, 20, had set aside the day to shop for her entire family.

"I was (busy) studying for exams and working," she said.

Lorenzen said she always shops last-minute, which usually comes at a price.

"I detest having to (snake) my way around a lot of people and wait in lines," she said.

KRISTEN THOMPSON/METRO VANCOUVER

Mary Doris, right, braves the rain on West Georgia Street yesterday to get caught up on last-minute Christmas shopping.

Mario, DJ Hero games in demand

SELLOUTS If you planned on getting a loved one Super Mario for Wii or DJ Hero this Christmas, you may be out of luck.

The video games have been sold out at the Future Shop on Granville and Robson streets, and are two of the store's most popular items this Christmas, said shop manager Tyler Haynes.

"We had almost 100 people asking for Super Mario (on Saturday)," said Haynes, adding that DJ Hero has been sold out for two weeks.

Other hot gifts are Sony eBooks, Netbook computers, Blu-ray players and Wii systems.

METRO VANCOUVER

Spending up

- Canadians spent five per cent more in the first week of December this year compared to the same time in 2008, according to a survey by Moneris Solutions Corp.

VANOC apologizes to symphony orchestra

VANCOUVER 2010 Games

RESOLUTION The Vancouver Symphony Orchestra has received an apology from VANOC after the musicians walked away from participating in the Games' opening ceremony.

VANOC asked the VSO to pre-record music for the opening event, but did not ask the musicians themselves to appear in the show. Maestro Bramwell Tovey, conductor of the VSO, was also to be replaced in the telecast of the ceremony by another conductor who would mime his role along to the pre-recorded performance.

In a joint press release this weekend, both parties patched things up. The VSO will participate in playing throughout the Cultural Olympiad, as well as performing the national anthems of more than 90 countries to be used throughout the Games.

The orchestra will still not appear during either the opening or closing ceremonies, though some of the symphony's musicians have teamed up with international players to record some music for both events.

SEAN KOLENKO/
FOR METRO VANCOUVER

Pepsi campaign 'distasteful': Coke

VANCOUVER 2010 Games

DISPUTE The cola wars have reached Olympic proportions.

Coca-Cola, which is an official sponsor of the 2010 Games, is accusing rival Pepsi of trying to cash in without investing in the Olympics.

On Friday, Pepsi distributed flags with the company's logo beside the Team Canada hockey logo, according CKNW radio. They also include the words Join the Cheer.

Coca-Cola public affairs director Kirsten Mihailides told the radio station Pepsi's campaign is "distasteful."

Pepsi says the logo is mean to support Team Canada at the upcoming World Junior Hockey Championships.

STIG NIELSEN/
FOR METRO VANCOUVER

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Average B.C. household spending rises in 2008

On average, British Columbia households spent $73,120 in 2008, that's up 0.7 per cent from the previous year, according to Statistics Canada. That's slightly more than the Canadian average of $71,360, but less than Alberta households, which led the country in average spending at $86,910. METRO VANCOUVER

City votes to hike taxes 2.26% in deficit faceoff

JEFF HODSON
jeff.hodson@metronews.ca

Vancouver homeowners will pay an additional $65 on average in property taxes in 2010.

City council approved Vancouver's 2010 operating budget on Friday. It calls for an increase in taxes of 2.26 per cent. Combined with a business-to-residential tax shift, it means homeowner taxes will rise by more than four per cent.

In a release, Mayor Gregor Robertson said the budget protected city priorities like homelessness and the environment despite a difficult financial situation.

Dr. Penny Ballem, Vancouver's city manager, announced in November that the city was staring down the barrel of a $62-million deficit brought on by declining revenues and increasing salaries, debt and operating costs.

She announced a number of deficit-busting measures, including a review of shared services and across-the-board fee increases.

She also said the city would trim about 160 jobs.

Average hike

- The owner of an average price home ($782,000) in Vancouver will see their taxes and utilities increase by $153 in 2010.

Virtually every city department felt the pinch.

The Vancouver Police Department delayed hiring more officers, while in a controversial move, the Parks Board chose to close the Bloedel Conservatory and the Stanley Park petting zoo.

The city's library board voted to cut back on operating hours and even close the Riley Park branch.

However, council opted to increase funding to libraries, retaining the current operating hours at the main branch and keeping the Riley Park location open.

Part of the money came from savings as non-unionized workers elected to give up one per cent of a planned four per cent raise.

Heed wants anti-gang task forces united

ShareYourViews
vancouverletters@metronews.ca

After a bloody year of gang warfare, B.C.'s solicitor general wants the various police task forces and units combined into one formidable intelligence team.

Kash Heed says he believes the problem of organized crime and gang activity is the number one public safety issue in the province.

B.C. has three separate teams working on gang files now and the administration of the units has recently been combined.

But Heed says merging those units and possibly adding other police teams will allow them to better fight gang crime.

"We have to make sure that the energy in all of them are working toward what we want to accomplish," he said.

Heed says the creation of the team emerges out of Premier Gordon Campbell's plan announced at the peak of the violence last February.

Before the violence slowed, two dozen gangsters and their associates were dead, while others were arrested and charged with murder and drugs and weapons charges.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Defence says lost Que. couple responsible for predicament

A Quebec couple "made a deliberate choice" to ski out of bounds at a B.C. resort last February that ended with tragic consequences, according to a statement of defence filed in a Vancouver court.

According to the RCMP, the Golden and District Search and Rescue Association and the Kicking Horse Mountain Resort, Gilles Blackburn, 51, and his wife Marie-Josee Fortin, 44, have only themselves to blame for spending 10 days lost in the wild.

Fortin died during the ordeal, leading her husband to sue the RCMP, search and rescue and the resort they were at.

The defendants say Blackburn "ought to have known" he wasn't prepared or trained to go out-of-bounds.

METRO VANCOUVER

News in brief

HOME INVASION A man was taken to hospital after he was shot in the hand during a home invasion in Maple Ridge. RCMP said a man knocked on the door and forced his way inside when the victim answered.

STOLEN TOYS A break-in at the Surrey Christmas Bureau this weekend resulted in two large foodbank boxes being stolen. While toys were taken, the food collected was left behind. The stolen donations had been part of the 12 Days of Giving campaign organized by children at Royal Heights Elementary School in Surrey.

BUYING PETS The B.C. SPCA is warning parents not to be impulsive shoppers when it comes to getting their kids a pet as a Christmas gift. The SPCA says families should spend time with a pet before adopting or buying it, and to make sure the animal and children connect.

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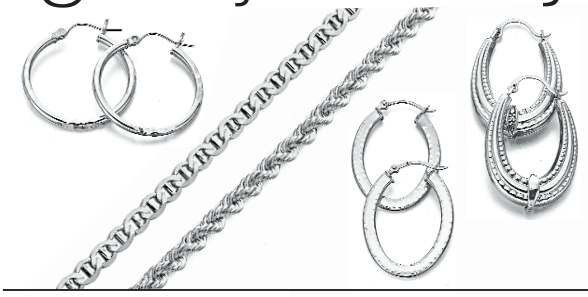

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Union taking legal action against health authorities

One of Saskatchewan's major health-care unions is taking its fight against the province's essential services legislation to the next level. The Service Employees International Union is taking legal action against four of the province's regional health authorities. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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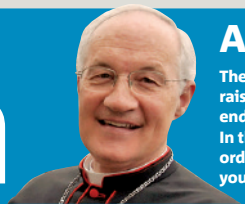

Ad taken out to explain sex assaults

The brother of Quebec's Roman Catholic archbishop, Cardinal Marc Ouellet, left, is raising eyebrows in la belle province after he took out a newspaper ad on the weekend to explain past sexual assaults involving minors, CBC News Online is reporting. In the ad, Paul Ouellet says he pleaded guilty to charges of sexual assault to end the ordeal, and claims his only mistake was succumbing to "advances" made by his two young victims. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Ministers met Red Cross head

MacKay, O'Connor, Day talked with organization's chief in '06

Three federal cabinet ministers and a senior government official met the head of the International Red Cross in the fall of 2006 as the humanitarian organization tried to focus Canada's attention on alleged abuses in Afghan prisons, The Canadian Press has learned.

Precisely what Jakob Kellenberger told Peter MacKay, Gordon O'Connor, Stockwell Day and Robert Greenhill, then the president of the Canadian International Development Agency, in the Sept. 26, 2006 meetings is blanketed by diplomatic secrecy.

MacKay was then Foreign Affairs minister, O'Connor was at Defence and Day was Public Safety minister overseeing Corrections Canada officers in Kandahar.

While the details of the meeting are secret, enough was said about Afghanistan to generate a report from MacKay's office a month later which flagged the Red Cross president's concerns.

The contents of the report, one of thousands of documents filed in the Military Police Complaints Commission investigation of torture allegations, are censored.

The email was titled: "Re: meeting with ICRC president re detention issues."

The Conservative government has insisted it never received direct warnings about possible Afghan torture of Canadian-transferred prisoners, although MacKay has conceded that general concerns were heard almost from the moment the government took office in early 2006.

The fact the Red Cross meetings took place raises further questions about what the federal government knew and the kind of warnings they received in those critical early months.

Officially, the Red Cross would only say the talks focused on topics including Afghanistan, humanitarian law in modern conflicts and co-operation with Canada.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Red Cross

- The Red Cross is bound by international convention not to discuss with other countries what it saw in Afghan prisons. But it could drop broad hints, as officials did at two meetings with Canadian officials in Kandahar in May and June 2006.

Value of public inquiries come into question

POLITICS With the country awash in calls for an arm's length probe into a variety of brewing scandals, questions are being raised about the efficacy of public inquiries.

While some inquiries are successful, others like the recently completed and widely criticized probe into an alleged pedophile ring in Cornwall, Ont., are long, expensive and poorly focused.

Some critics argue highly politicized inquiries solve more issues through negative publicity than through the recommendations they produce.

Others say they tarnish reputations, breach individual rights and aren't worth the damage they do to the public's faith in government institutions.

"No one listens to the recommendations."
Clayton Ruby, lawyer

Prime Minister Stephen Harper has faced daily attacks in the House of Commons for failing to probe allegations raised by diplomat Richard Colvin that Canada knowingly turned Afghan prisoners over to torture.

Quebec Premier Jean Charest's recent drop in opinion polls can partly be attributed to his steadfast refusal to allow an inquiry into allegations of corruption involving politicians, construction companies and the Italian Mafia.

Public inquiries have become so ubiquitous in Canada that when politicians refuse to call them, they're automatically accused of trying to hide something. But as opposition parties, the public and other stakeholders continue pressing the issue, there are some who sympathize, at least in part, with the leaders.

Toronto lawyer Clayton Ruby says inquiries are good at exposing evidence of wrongdoing, but that the recommendations made by these costly commissions ultimately end up on library shelves gathering dust.

"No one listens to the recommendations," he says.

"They're a complete waste of time in terms of the supposed work that they do."

Ruby cites the case of Donald Marshall Jr., an aboriginal man wrongly convicted of murder in the 1970s who became the poster boy for native rights.

The very first recommendation issued by the commission of inquiry into the matter was to create an independent body to investigate wrongful convictions.

"No one's ever done it," Ruby says. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Ontario South Korean carries flame

DARREN CALABRESE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

World figure skating champion Kim Yu-Na of South Korea carries the Olympic flame in Hamilton, Ont., on Saturday.

Feds scrambling to get national pavilion prepared for Olympics

VANCOUVER 2010 Games

PROMOTION The Conservative government is in an 11th-hour scramble to put together a national pavilion at the Vancouver Olympics, even though it was advised for years by bureaucrats and partners that it should take advantage of the Winter Games to promote Canada to the world.

Insiders say it's all part of a penny-pinching approach the Tories have taken to leveraging the Olympics for economic gain.

The late planning means the government has been frantically trying to secure a live feed of Olympic competitions for its pavilion, a source said.

The Games begin in just under two months.

Meanwhile, the provinces have had their "houses" in order for months, with Ontario alone spending $4.5 million on its pavilion. The buildings and tents are designed to showcase everything from tourism to investment opportunities.

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Women's bookstore struggling to stay open

Nearly two decades after almost being destroyed in a firebombing, the Toronto Women's Bookstore is once again fighting for its survival. Earlier this week, the 36-year-old bookseller issued a desperate plea to its patrons, revealing that financially it was "in crisis" and needed funds urgently to stay open. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mousehunt trapping fans

There's a place where mice are welcome, where make-believe rodents eat make-believe cheese millions of times each day.

It's a land of serene meadows and mayhem, of calm clearings and dusty catacombs infested by clever little critters that may rob you blind or give you buckets of gold.

It's the magical world of Mousehunt and it exists in a spartan second-floor office in Oakville, Ont., where computer wizards and artists have developed a Facebook game played by nearly two million people around the world.

It's a tongue-in-cheek nation centred in the Town of Gnawnia, where players help the king rid the kingdom of mice in all shapes and sizes. The king even pays players an hourly wage in gold, which they use to buy cheese and traps, which will get them even more gold as they rise through the hunter ranks.

Some traps smash mice to smithereens. Others assault them with loud music or drop them into a bottomless grave. There are even humane traps that fling mice into a fantasy world of endless cheese.

JIM WILKES/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Hitgrab CEO Joel Augé shows off some mice sent to his Oakville, Ont., office by fans of its popular Facebook game Mousehunt.

You don't have to spend a dime to play Mousehunt, but players can buy online Super Brie, which attracts mice better than the ordinary cheddar, gouda or special blends that players can craft themselves.

"We're really in the business of selling pretend cheese," says Joel Augé, 31-year-old CEO of Hitgrab, the company that runs Mousehunt and a new game called Mythmonger.

"We're purveyors of fine digital cheese," he adds with a laugh.

It's worked so much better than the first Facebook foray he and partner Brian Freeman made in 2006, when they started an application to help brides organize wedding details, gifts and registrations.

"It failed miserably," he said, because it meant investing a lot of screen time.

The beauty of Mousehunt is that it takes just seconds to check your trap or sound the hunter's horn, which begins the search for mice. Even if you're not in the game, Facebook friends who play can help you nab mice while you're away.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

MPs ask Harper to let ex-KGB agent stay

SANCTUARY A pair of B.C. politicians are appealing to Prime Minister Stephen Harper to act in the spirit of Christmas and allow to stay in Canada a former KGB agent who's taken sanctuary in a church.

Mikhail Lennikov has lived in a Vancouver church since the government denied his application to stay in the country six months ago, though he's resided with his wife and son here for 12 years.

MPs Ujjal Dosanjh and Don Davies stood beside the man yesterday and made the public request to grant the 49-year-old permanent residence.

Lennikov has repeatedly said his work in the 1980s as a translator for the Soviet security agency was innocuous and commenced under pressure.

Last week, he produced 3,500 pages of documents from government departments in an attempt to show there is nothing to back up claims he is a national security threat.

Border officials have so far respected a convention not to enter the church and arrest Lennikov, who says he's unsure how long his stay will last.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

H1N1 flu crisis handled OK: Poll

Flu Outbreak

HEALTH Canadians think governments at all three levels have done an OK job of handling the H1N1 flu, though many also think the risk was exaggerated, a new poll suggests.

The Canadian Press Harris-Decima survey suggests that as concern is waning among Canadians, they are generally satisfied with how their governments responded to the pandemic.

Nearly three-quarters — or 73 per cent — of those who took part in the survey assessed Ottawa's performance as good or fair.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Bus to Toronto crashes, 40 left stranded

One person was slightly injured and 40 passengers were stranded for several hours yesterday morning after their bus from New York City to Toronto crashed on Interstate 95 near Buffalo and the company, Megabus, didn't send a replacement. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Afghan troops put to the test

The harsh sound of the national anthem blasting over the Afghan countryside on the weekend left little doubt that a new battle for one of the most dangerous districts of southern Afghanistan had been joined in earnest.

As Canadian soldiers turned up the volume on the portable speaker and two American Kiowa helicopters twisted and turned overhead, Canadian-mentored Afghan soldiers swept through the village of Chahar Bagh.

Scores of freshly arrived U.S. troops — ultimately under Canadian command — provided firepower support.

Operation Eagle had landed in the Arghandab district, marking several firsts. The sweep of Chahar Bagh was the first time the Canadian-mentored battalion of Afghan soldiers — known as 3rd Kandak — had planned and executed a major operation. It was also the first time the 2-508 unit of the U.S. 82nd Airborne had deployed in Canada's new area of operations.

Arghandab is prized by the Taliban insurgency as a key entrance to Kandahar city.

"We succeed when the ANA are out flourishing on their own," said Maj. Andrew Vivian, who heads the unit of Canadian mentors for 3rd Kandak. "If they succeed, it means we have done our jobs."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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PQ says Charest failed at talks

Go Green

CLIMATE Prime Minister Stephen Harper isn't the only one being criticized for his performance at last week's climate talks in Copenhagen.

The Parti Québécois lashed out at Quebec Premier Jean Charest yesterday, accusing him of failing to represent the interests of Quebecers on the world stage.

PQ opposition environment critic Scott McKay said despite Charest's criticism of the federal government in the national press, he remained mute with delegates from other nations.

"At least we would have expected the premier of Quebec to take a strong stance against (Prime Minister Stephen) Harper in front of international delegates," he said.

At the Copenhagen climate summit, Quebec and Ontario criticized other provinces over pollution caused by the development of the oilsands.

Charest and Ontario Environment Minister John Gerretsen refuse to let their provinces carry the load for bigger polluters, like Alberta and Saskatchewan, when it comes to meeting emissions goals.

Both provinces have committed to deeper emissions cuts than the federal government.

"Climate change has become a new constitutional hot spot between Quebec and Ottawa," said McKay,

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Homer has real nuclear power

CULTURE An American philosophy professor says many people may be concerned about nuclear power from watching the animated cartoon show The Simpsons.

Dr. Bill Irwin, a professor at King's College in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., says Homer — the bumbling main character in The Simpsons who works at a nuclear power plant — has perhaps put a negative spin on nuclear power by doing such things on the show as trying to stop a meltdown by randomly pressing buttons on a console. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Lobsters take flight

About 100 tonnes of live Nova Scotia lobster are being shipped from Halifax to parts of Europe and Asia this weekend on four 747 cargo aircraft. Previously, lobster shipments were made on smaller planes over a longer period of time. THE CANADIAN PRESS

McGuinty freezes pay for Ontario MPPs

The Ontario Liberal government is "trying to lead by example" with a freeze on MPPs' pay that other public-sector employers should also consider imposing, says Premier Dalton McGuinty.

Striking a note from one of his political heroes, former U.S. president John F. Kennedy, McGuinty issued a clarion call for sacrifices for the greater good.

"Ask not what your provincial government can impose on you; ask what as a member of the public sector you can bring to the table," the premier said Friday in Ottawa.

"In some ways, those of us within the public sector have been sheltered from the full ravages of this private-sector recession," he said. "So what is it that we can do now, working together, to take into account what's happened to public finances?"

Asked if that's a message to unions or management, McGuinty said: "It's a message to all of us.

"That's an expression of direction on my part and on the part of our government. But we'll give specific and concrete expression to that in our budget."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Deadly earthquake strikes Africa
A strong earthquake destroyed several buildings in the African nation of Malawi yesterday, killing at least three people and injuring about 200, a government official said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World

Adams says father abused his family

Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams, left, says his late father was a man who emotionally, physically and sexually abused members of his family. Adams' disclosure comes as the president of the Irish Republican Army-linked party calls on his brother Liam to surrender to police to answer charges that he abused his daughter. Adams says that he has no recollection of being personally abused and did not go into detail about the allegations. Gerry Adams Sr., a former IRA prisoner, died in 2003. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Israel admits it harvested organs

Israel has admitted that in the 1990s, its forensic pathologists harvested organs from dead bodies, including Palestinians, without permission of their families.

The issue emerged with publication of an interview with the then-head of Israel's Abu Kabir forensic institute, Dr. Jehuda Hiss.

The interview was conducted in 2000 by an American academic, who released it because of a huge controversy last summer over an allegation by a Swedish newspaper that Israel was killing Palestinians in order to harvest their organs. Israel hotly denied the charge. Parts of the interview were broadcast on Israel's Channel 2 TV over the weekend. In it, Hiss said, "We started to harvest corneas ... Whatever was done was highly informal. No permission was asked from the family."

In a response to the TV report, the Israeli military confirmed that the practice took place. "This activity ended a decade ago and does not happen any longer," the military said in a statement quoted by Channel 2. In the interview, Hiss described how his doctors would mask the removal of corneas from bodies. "We'd glue the eyelid shut," he said. "We wouldn't take corneas from families we knew would open the eyelids."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Settlers enraged by slowdown plan

- Israeli authorities could soon use special commando units, unmanned spy planes and cellphone-jamming equipment to enforce a moratorium on new settlement construction in the West Bank, military officials said yesterday, deepening a showdown between the government and Jewish settlers. Enraged settlers vowed to resist the plan, prompting Defence Minister Ehud Barak to warn they would face the full wrath of the military if they continue to flout the 10-month slowdown.

Pakistan **Heightened security**

MOHAMMAD SAJJAD/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pakistani women walk past a police officer in the troubled city of Peshawar yesterday. Authorities are taking extra security measures during the Shiite Muslim mourning month of Muharram, as security agencies fear an increased level of violence.

News in brief

NEW YORK Bicyclists who planned to go topless to protest the removal of a Brooklyn bike lane switched gears Saturday, pinning plastic breasts to their jackets as they rolled into a snowstorm. Dozens of bikers joined a protest called the "Freedom Ride" to oppose the removal of the bike path.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Leaders defend accord

Go Green

CLIMATE CHANGE China, the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases, lauded yesterday the outcome of a historic UN climate conference that ended with a non-binding agreement that urges major polluters to make deeper emissions cuts — but does not require it.

Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi said the international climate talks that brought more than 110 leaders together in Copenhagen produced "significant and positive" results.

m.metronews.ca

As international pressure mounts on the U.S. to curb its emissions, natural gas is emerging as an unlikely solution. Scan this barcode for the article or go to metronews.ca/world

The U.S. Obama administration yesterday also defended the agreement as a "great step forward" — despite widespread disappointment among environmentalists that the pact does not include mandatory targets that would draw sanctions.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Runaway sailor found

Dekker

ST. MAARTEN Police tracked down 14-year-old Dutch sailor Laura Dekker in the Caribbean territory of St. Maarten, days after she ran away from home leaving her boat behind, Dutch media reported yesterday.

Dekker made headlines around the world earlier this year when she unsuccessfully went to court as a 13-year-old to fight for the right to set off on a single-handed circumnavigation of the world in her boat, Guppy. St. Maarten is part of the Netherlands Antilles, a group of self-governing Caribbean islands.

Earlier yesterday, Dutch police spokesman Bernhard Jens said authorities issued an international alert after Dekker was reported missing Friday.

"We do not believe this is a crime," Jens said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dozens killed in Nigerian crash
At least 55 people died and 38 others were injured when a truck carrying bags of fertilizer slammed into a market in central Nigeria. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bill almost there

U.S. Senate health-care legislation on track for passage

U.S. Senate Democrats pushed toward a critical vote to advance historic health-care reform legislation as outnumbered Republicans pledged a fight to the end against President Barack Obama's top domestic policy priority.

On Saturday, jubilant Senate Democrats announced they had locked in the 60th and decisive vote needed to overcome Republican stalling tactics. That came from moderate Democratic Sen. Ben Nelson of Nebraska, the last holdout in their caucus, who declared his support for revised legislation crafted by Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid.

That put the bill firmly on a path for Christmas Eve passage.

To keep the process moving under Senate rules, Democrats will need to show 60 votes in a series of votes. The first — and most critical — test vote on a cloture motion to end debate on the bill was set for about a 1 a.m. debate.

Republican Sen. John McCain of Arizona, Obama's opponent in last year's election, said there was probably nothing to keep Democrats from passing the bill by Christmas Eve.

Still, he said, Republicans would not relent in the battle for public opinion.

"We'll fight the good fight. We will fight until the last vote," said McCain. He said the political climate under Obama has become more partisan than ever.

A senior adviser to Obama criticized Republican senators yesterday for trying to halt final action, saying the American people deserve a vote.

"The Republican party has spent a month engaged in parliamentary manoeuvers and dilatory tactics to try and prevent a vote," David Axelrod, the Obama adviser, told ABC's This Week.

"It represents the culmination of a struggle begun by (President) Theodore Roosevelt nearly a century ago."
U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden in an editorial in yesterday's New York Times

Vice-President Joe Biden wrote in The New York Times yesterday that senators should support the bill because "it represents the culmination of a struggle begun by (President) Theodore Roosevelt nearly a century ago" to improve health care.

"I would vote yes for this bill certain that it includes the fundamental, essential change that opponents of reform have resisted for generations," he wrote.

The United States is the only wealthy industrialized nation that does not have universal health coverage. Health insurance in the U.S. is provided primarily by employers, but the ranks of the uninsured have been growing due to job losses in the recent recession.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Weather wreaking havoc in Europe

EUROPE Snowstorms and subfreezing temperatures have battered Europe, killing 29 people in Poland alone and wreaking havoc on air, train and car travellers from the Nordics to Italy on the last weekend before Christmas.

France's civil aviation authority ordered the cancellation of 40 per cent of flights out of Paris' Charles de Gaulle and Orly airports yesterday through mid-afternoon. Flights at Manchester Airport, Britain's busiest outside the London area, resumed after its only runway was briefly closed for snow clearance.

There was trouble on the railways too, with trains from Belgium to Italy delayed by icy, frozen tracks.

Eurostar trains through the Channel Tunnel weren't running Sunday as officials tried to pinpoint the problem that led four trains to come to a halt in the tunnel linking England and France, leaving passengers stranded for hours Saturday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Rare white rhinos relocated

Four of the world's last known eight northern white rhinos landed in Kenya yesterday and were transported to a game park where officials hope the endangered mammals will reproduce and save their subspecies. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Britain-France rail link closed for train probe

Breakdowns left thousands stuck in tunnel

The only rail link between Britain and France was closed indefinitely yesterday as Eurostar investigated a series of train breakdowns that trapped thousands of people in the Channel Tunnel for hours.

The stoppage meant that about 31,000 people in Britain, France and Belgium had to cancel trips planned on Eurostar on Saturday, and 26,000 more were expected to be affected yesterday.

Eurostar originally said that four of its trains were halted in the tunnel Friday evening.

Travel troubles

- The problem is the latest of several that British travellers have faced as the Christmas and New Year's holidays approach. Several airports have been affected by unusually heavy snowfalls.

Yesterday the company said a fifth train had also been disabled in the tunnel before being towed to London. A sixth train broke down Friday, although outside the tunnel, 38 kilometres of which sits under the English Channel, Eurostar said.

Trapped Eurostar passengers spoke of languishing in the dark for up to 16 hours without adequate food, water or any clear idea of what was happening.

Following unsuccessful attempts to move some passengers between London and Paris on Saturday evening, the company has cancelled all services "until we get to the bottom of what happened Friday night," Eurostar chief executive Richard Brown said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Macau **Dubious anniversary**

KIN CHEUNG/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hundreds of demonstrators march yesterday in Macau, during the 10th anniversary of the former Portuguese enclave's return to Chinese rule. Hundreds of demonstrators called for greater economic equity, an end to corruption and the right to elect the territory's leader, currently appointed by Beijing and rubber-stamped by a committee in Macau.

No problems with Palin: McCain

POLITICS Senator John McCain says he understands why Sarah Palin blacked out his name on a McCain campaign visor so she could avoid recognition while on vacation in Hawaii.

The Arizona Republican made the comments about his 2008 running mate on Fox News yesterday.

Palin blacked out McCain's name with a felt marker recently, saying she is fond of him but wanted to travel "incognito." McCain said yesterday he has no problems with the blacked-out name. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Iraqi PM journeys to Egypt

VISIT Iraq's prime minister opened a landmark visit to Egypt yesterday in what aides called an ambitious attempt to improve relations with one of the Arab world's most powerful players.

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's last visit to Egypt was in 2007 as part of an international conference on Iraq's future. But this visit was designed for meetings with Egyptian officials. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

VOLCANO The Philippines' most active volcano could erupt within days, officials warned yesterday after detecting a drastic surge in quakes and rumbling sounds in surrounding foothills. Tens of thousands have been evacuated as a precaution. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Comment

Transportation's legacy

Questions swirl around transit's plans after 2010

InTransit
Derek Moscato
dmoscato@yahoo.com

Metro Vancouver commuters will remember 2009 for the completion of key mega-projects in the region — especially the long-anticipated Canada Line, which is already transforming travel patterns.

But there were other significant transport breakthroughs as well: The June opening of the Golden Ears Bridge, and, of course, the controversial Burrard Street Bridge bike lane trial. And given the huge crowds that showed up for some of the openings, it seems people-moving infrastructure is — deserved or not — more popular than the Beatles.

The coming year should also be memorable in terms of impact. That's in great part due to the Winter Olympics and the intensive transportation plan that accompanies the event.

But even before the Olympic cauldron is lit at B.C. Place, some Games' transit legacies will already be rolling. A case in point is the False Creek streetcar demonstration, otherwise known as the Olympic Line. Earlier this month, the sleek Bombardier-made streetcars — which are on loan from Belgium — arrived in Vancouver.

The free service, which gets underway in January, will attract plenty of fanfare before and during the Games, but the big question is what happens afterwards? The city has high hopes for the project, and is hoping to extend it to Gastown, Yaletown and even Stanley Park in the long run. Let's hope TransLink finally embraces this sustainable and people-friendly mode of transport, which to date has been championed almost exclusively by the City of Vancouver.

Questions are also swirling around another transportation development connected to the Olympics: The second Amtrak train connecting Vancouver to Seattle. The trial service was launched in anticipation of Olympic traffic from Washington State, but it's uncertain whether the passenger rail service will carry on. For the sake of tourism and economic growth in B.C. and Washington State, our government and tourism agencies must find a way to keep this expanded service intact.

Speaking of services with a foggy future, TransLink's long-promised third SeaBus sailing was "un-promised" by the agency earlier this year. But three SeaBuses will still operate during the Olympics, and that has some observers wondering whether the more frequent sailings will continue post-Games.

But if TransLink does pull one of the SeaBuses out of service for good, don't expect the savings to be passed on to customers.

Quite the opposite, TransLink plans to raise fares on April Fool's Day. And that's no joke.

Derek Moscato is a writer with a focus on urban issues, transportation, architecture and economics; dmoscato@yahoo.com.

Views

Christmas – a lot of assembly required

HineSight
Anne Hines
metronews.ca/hinesight

Today, our final instalment on Prepping for the Holidays:

Sanity: Is it overrated?

Or, all I want for Christmas is a G-17A size 12 Allen key.

After the excitement of Christmas morning comes another traditional holiday event: Assembly Afternoon.

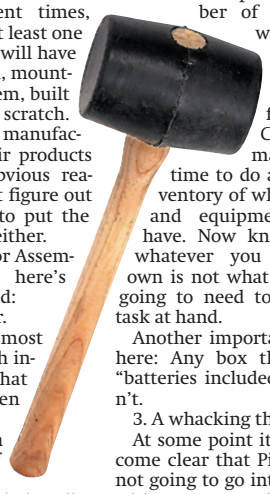
In olden days, Assembly Afternoon did not exist. A ball was a ball. A jump rope was a jump rope. And a quoit and skittle set was ... actually, I have no idea what that was. But the point is, it didn't need to be put together. You got your quoit and your skittle and you were good to go.

Now that we live in more convenient times, it's likely that at least one gift you receive will have to be assembled, mounted or, it may seem, built entirely from scratch. This is because manufacturers ship their products in parts for obvious reasons: They can't figure out how the heck to put the thing together either.

To be ready for Assembly Afternoon, here's what you'll need:

1. A translator.

These days most items come with instructions that have been thoughtfully translated into a wide variety of languages. These may include Klingon, Hobbit and British semaphore, but they will never, ever include whatever language you speak.



2. The home phone number of a hardware store owner. Before Christmas, take time to do a full inventory of what tools and equipment you have. Now know that whatever you already own is not what you are going to need to do the task at hand.

Another important note here: Any box that says "batteries included," doesn't.

3. A whacking thing.

At some point it will become clear that Piece C is not going to go into Slot A without some serious persuasion. Excellent whacking things I have used include Nutcracker dolls and that extra piece that didn't seem to fit anywhere. Tip: Do not use your spouse's new BlackBerry. Trust me on this one.

4. Assistance.

While most assembly efforts are one-person jobs, it's traditional to have someone on hand to provide helpful comments such as, "That's not how I'd do it," and "Too bad you have to do that or you could be having a drink like me." While it's not OK to use the whacking thing on this person, it is perfectly acceptable to give them a gift next year that comes in a ka-gillion pieces.

Wishing you all a happy holiday and joyous Assembly Afternoon!

Anne Hines is an author and humour writer. She has written three novels and one collection of nonfiction humour.

MICHAEL DE ADDER

Worth mentioning

Eco-friendly shopping may lead to bad habits: Study

Buying green may help save the planet, but a new study suggests it might also make you more prone to cheat, steal, and be selfish.

In a paper to be published in an upcoming issue of the journal Psychological Science, University of Toronto researchers Nina Mazar and Chen-Bo Zhong studied how students behaved after being given the option of purchasing environmentally friendly products, like organic yogurt or biodegradable laundry detergent, or conventional items.

They found students who chose green products were less likely to act altruistically afterwards than those who were simply exposed to green products.

The study, said Mazar, an assistant professor of marketing with the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management, builds on research into the idea of "moral regulation" — that people either consciously or unconsciously balance bad deeds with good ones.

Purchasing habits

- While the findings might deflate the self-righteous air of those who brag about bringing canvas bags to the grocery store, researcher Nina Mazar says it definitely shouldn't be seen as a condemnation of environmentally friendly purchasing habits.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Workers awarded $100M in BP lawsuit
A federal jury Friday awarded more than $100 million US to 10 workers who claimed they were injured in 2007 when a toxic substance was released at BP PLC's Texas City plant. The jurors in Galveston, about 80 kilometres southeast of Houston, gave each contract worker $10 million in punitive damages. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Business

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(Friday's close)	(Friday's close)	(Friday's close)	(Friday's close)

EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Market volatility expected

Stock markets are expected to remain volatile in the shortened trading week ahead of Christmas, as investors clean up their books before the start of the new year.

Motivation will come from turbulent commodity prices that proved especially unpredictable last week as the U.S. dollar bounced around in value. Traders will also be making last-minute trades to meet the tax-loss trading deadline for the year.

"There's a whole bunch of conflicted forces at work," said John Johnston, chief strategist at the Harbour Group at RBC Dominion Securities. "The U.S. economy is showing pretty decisive indications that it's in an economic recovery, but a very slow one."

Markets will operate on a regular schedule until Christmas Eve, when they close at 1 p.m. EST on both sides of the border and will reopen Boxing Day.

Economists and observers have predicted trading this month would be relatively muted compared with previous years, partly because the TSX rallied in early November to a high for the year and since then many traders have taken time off for the holidays. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dutch carmaker makes new offer to buy Saab

AUTO In a final attempt to rescue Saab Automobile AB, Dutch automaker Spyker Cars submitted a new offer yesterday to buy the Swedish brand from General Motors Co.

Spyker said it has submitted a new 11-point proposal to GM, addressing the issues that made talks collapse earlier this week.

GM on Friday said it would wind down Saab because issues arose during the sales talks with Spyker that could not be resolved, and the window of time to complete a deal was small.

Spyker CEO Victor Muller said he hoped the new offer would make GM change its mind.

"We are very confident that our renewed offer will remove the impasse that was standing in the way of an agreement on Friday, and this would still allow us to conclude the deal prior to the expiry of the deadline originally set by GM of Dec. 31," he said in a statement.

Muller said the new offer removes a demand that a loan from the European Investment Bank to Saab be approved before the end of the year, and has the full backing of Saab's management. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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SCANLIFE

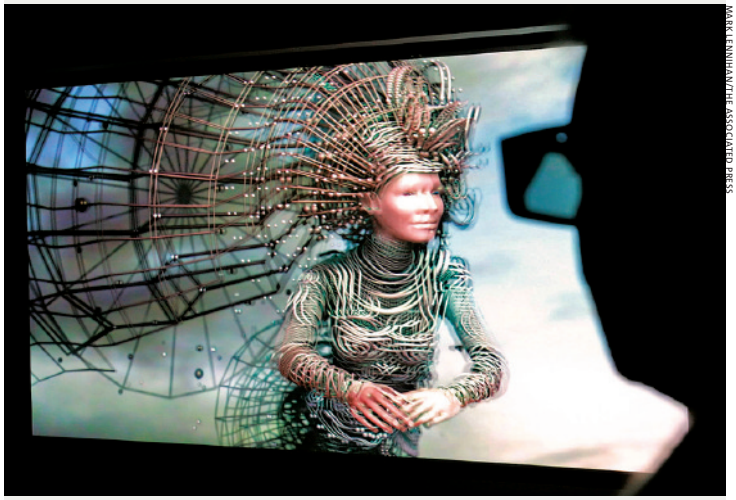
After ending a border dispute with Iran, Iraq's rebuilding oil industry moves toward developing a lucrative oilfield. Scan this barcode for the article or go to metronews.ca/world

Business in brief

TECH After a gain of more than 10 per cent on Friday and beating profit forecasts, Research In Motion faced questions about if it can maintain such growth in the face of market competition. PC Magazine analyst Sascha Segan said BlackBerrys are starting to look a bit dull and "definitely need a facelift."

BIOMASS A debate is brewing between the Nova Scotia government, focus groups and environmentalists over the sustainability of burning low-grade wood to meet the province's energy needs. THE CANADIAN PRESS

New York **Larger than life**



MARK LENNIHAN/AP, ASSOCIATED PRESS

A visitor to Stereo Exchange in New York over the weekend wears 3-D glasses to view a demonstration of Digital Projection's Titan 1080p 3-D projector on a three-metre screen. The English company is marketing the 3-D systems to high-end home users and the military.

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American pika losing its home

Faced with global warming, many creatures will migrate to cooler latitudes — but the American pika can't do that because their habitat in North America is currently restricted to small, disconnected habitat 'islands' in numerous mountain ranges. **WWF**

Going Green

Give the Earth a gift

With only a few shopping days left, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation has launched a new e-gift available at tdfef.com/egift. One hundred per cent of every donation will support grassroots environment and wildlife projects across Canada. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: BEN.RYCROFT@METRONEWS.CA

Water supply in danger?

Kevin Wall

ERICK TAPIA
Metro World News

On Apr. 18 next year thousands of people across the world will run 6km — the average distance women and children walks to find water in drought-hit parts of Africa.

The Dow Live Earth Run for Water is the brainchild of Live Earth's CEO Kevin Wall and is aimed at raising awareness of what he believes is be the key global crisis, lack of drinking water.

He spoke to Metro:

Q Is the planet's fresh water in danger?

A Well the planet is full of water but the reserve of drinkable water is actually getting smaller and more polluted.

If you go to the drought areas of Africa the rivers are dry.

Women and children will walk 6 kms to get basic drinking water.

Q Do you think that humanity will solve the water problem?

A I hope that corporations, governments and individuals will find a solution. It will take major corporations to change the way they do business and their water usage, it will take Governments to continue to push forward to find a better policy as global citizens.

Q What sort of actions are being taken around the world?

A There are different actions in different parts of the world. In the United States and Europe you turn on the tap and the water comes out so here we need to look at major conservation efforts and conserve this precious resource.

But it is different in other parts of the world — in some parts it may be activism, in others it may be actually drilling water wells.

China using pig power

Village becomes model for renewable energy with bio-fuel

ANN-AËL DURAND
Metro World News

The inhabitants of Cao Tian Da, in the Chinese province of Yunnan, cook and heat their homes with pig excrement — an example of transition towards new energies encouraged by China.

The signs painted along the road state it clearly: Cao Tian Da is a "model village for renewable energy." This 140-inhabitant hamlet, in the mountains of Yunnan, seems traditional, with red-clay houses, corn ears hung for drying, and chickens running in the courtyard. But in the streets, public lamps are equipped with solar panels. On the roof, brand-new solar heaters are glittering, and on the whitewashed walls, crude paintings explain how to use the new energy: bio-gas, made from pig feces.

"It is very convenient," explains Wan Qin, in her new kitchen.

The young peasant opens a tap and activates a gas stove — much better than her old fireplace.

"Before, I had to collect firewood in the mountain, with my baby on my back. Now, I am relieved. We also have hot water with the heater."

Her electricity bill has been reduced by half, and the forest is preserved. An important issue for these families: their village has been moved by the authorities for environmental reasons linked with deforestation.

The gas in Wan Qin kitchen is freely provided by an industrial pigsty, 1 km away. The company, Hui Jian, strongly subsidized by the local authorities, keeps the excrement of its 2,000 pigs in big manure pits — 250 cubic metres per day, which ferment and produce methane.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Pig feces is used to create bio-gas which powers these homes.

45 In China, 45 per cent of the population still live in the countryside. China has become a bigger greenhouse gas issuer in the last two years. It is one of the most polluted countries, suffering from acid rains, desertification and water contamination.

The industrial pigsty keeps the excrement of 2,000 pigs, which is used to create a bio gas that powers the nearby village.

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Athletics close to signing Crisp

The Oakland Athletics are close to agreeing with free-agent outfielder Coco Crisp on a one-year contract with a club option for the 2011 season. A person with knowledge of the negotiations confirmed an impending deal on condition of anonymity. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sports

Williams sets record

Miami running back Ricky Williams reached 1,000 yards rushing for this season on his fifth carry yesterday against Tennessee, setting an NFL record for the longest span between 1,000-yard seasons at six years. This marks the fifth 1,000-yard rushing season of his career. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EDITOR: DON.MCHOULL@METRONEWS.CA

Sports in brief

NFL San Diego, Arizona and Minnesota clinched division titles yesterday, while Philadelphia surged into the playoffs as at least a wild card. The Chargers (11-3) edged Cincinnati 27-24 yesterday and when Denver lost to Oakland, the AFC West belonged to San Diego for the fourth straight season.

HOCKEY An exhibition victory over Sweden came with a small scare for Canada's world junior team. Forward Taylor Hall, a candidate to be the top draft pick in 2010, left late in the first period of Canada's 6-2 victory last night when he banged his knee after being knocked down in front of Sweden's net. Coach Willie Desjardins said Hall was kept out of the final two periods as a precaution.

FORMULA ONE Italian organizers say a deal has been signed with Formula One chief Bernie Ecclestone to stage a Rome Grand Prix on the streets of Italy's capital. Course planner Maurizio Flammini told Sky Italia yesterday that an agreement with Ecclestone "has already been done and signed" but did not say when the first Rome GP might be held.

ENGLAND Frank Lampard drove home a twice retaken penalty against his former club as Chelsea came from behind to draw 1-1 at West Ham on yesterday to move four points ahead at the top of the Premier League.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Blues beat listless Canucks

NHL RESULTS

Blues 3 Canucks 1

AT

David Backes scored twice yesterday as the St. Louis Blues vacated the Western Conference cellar with a 3-1 victory over the Vancouver Canucks.

Backes, who has five goals in his last five games, gave the Blues 1-0 and 2-1 leads. Keith Tkachuk made it 3-1 in the second period.

Shane O'Brien ended a two-year scoring drought by giving the listless Canucks a 1-1 tie after 20 minutes, but after that they couldn't solve goalie Ty Conklin, who finished with 29 saves.

The Blues, who snapped a string of two losses as they look for consistency this season, improved to 15-14-5 and moved into 12th spot in the West.

The Canucks, who left the ice to a smattering of boos, lost for the second time with two starts remaining in a season-long eight-game homestand.

Both losses came against teams last in the West on game day and the Canucks remained out of a playoff position at 20-16-0. They failed to overtake eighth-place Detroit and Dallas.

The homestand is crucial to Vancouver's playoff chances as the Canucks play eight road games prior to the Olympic break and six more away from GM Place when the Winter Games end.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

St. Louis Blues forward David Perron shoots the puck wide of the net as he slides into Vancouver Canucks goalie Roberto Luongo last night at GM Place.

Familiar faces return

- The Vancouver Canucks added a pair of old hands to their staff. Dave Babych and Glen Hanlon were hired by the team yesterday. Babych will serve as player-development consultant, while Hanlon will work as a goaltender scout.

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SCOREBOARD

NHL

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Chicago 3 Detroit 0
St. Louis 3 VANCOUVER 1

TODAY'S GAMES

Buffalo at Toronto, 4 p.m.
Tampa Bay at N.Y. Islanders, 4 p.m.
Florida at Philadelphia, 4 p.m.
N.Y. Rangers at Carolina, 4 p.m.
Montreal at Atlanta, 4 p.m.
Boston at Ottawa, 4:30 p.m.
New Jersey at Pittsburgh, 4:30 p.m.
Colorado at Minnesota, 5 p.m.
San Jose at Dallas, 5:30 p.m.
St. Louis at Edmonton, 6 p.m.
Columbus at Phoenix, 6 p.m.

NFL

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Tennessee 27 Miami 24 (OT)
Arizona 31 Detroit 24
Atlanta 10 N.Y. Jets 7
Houston 16 St. Louis 13
New England 17 Buffalo 10
Cleveland 41 Kansas City 34
Oakland 20 Denver 19
San Diego 27 Cincinnati 24
Baltimore 31 Chicago 7
Tampa Bay 24 Seattle 7
Pittsburgh 37 Green Bay 36
Philadelphia 27 San Francisco 13
Carolina 26 Minnesota 7

TODAY'S GAME

N.Y. Giants at Washington, 5:30 p.m.

NBA

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Toronto 98 New Orleans 92
Boston 122 Minnesota 104
L.A. Lakers 93 Detroit 81
Memphis 102 Denver 96
Portland 102 Miami 95
New York 98 Charlotte 94
Dallas 102 Cleveland 95

TODAY'S GAMES

Milwaukee at Indiana, 4 p.m.
Utah at Orlando, 4 p.m.
Sacramento at Chicago, 5 p.m.
L.A. Clippers at San Antonio, 5:30 p.m.
Cleveland at Phoenix, 6 p.m.

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Playing hooky with swine flu

A couple of university students interviewed by Maclean's admit to faking H1N1 in order to get out of class or exams, as schools across the country have revised their sick-note policies and encouraged students with flu-like symptoms to stay far away from campus, no questions asked. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Workology

New site for N.S. university

The University of King's College has a new-look website. The site describes the Halifax-based institution as a "tightly-knit and extraordinarily lively academic community." On the site, visitors will find testimonials from past students, recent Twitter posts, event listings and news headlines. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

A Santa suit dresses up a third career

OddJobs

There are few jobs that value a mature complexion, white beard and a somewhat stocky body type. But if you look the part, playing Santa like Bob McTavish does on a regular basis is a great job.

McTavish, 67, got his first gig as Santa five years ago when organizers of a Christmas party in Bala, near his home in Ontario's Muskoka region, needed someone last minute.

Word soon got around that McTavish "does Santa," and it took off from there.

This, of course, is not his first career. He started off in business, and worked in senior management for a various retail chains. Twenty years ago, he left corporate life and started up his own real estate brokerage for business clients.

Eight years ago, he moved from Toronto to Muskoka, renovated his dad's old cottage and was reconsidering his career options — the real estate business was slowing down — when the Santa work started.

"I was looking for something to take up the slack," says McTavish.

The jobs working parties and parades fit his schedule: it takes up much of the early winter while real estate gets busy in the spring.

In between, he swims, snowmobiles, travels and goes to the theatre..

"I'm reasonably young. I know another fellow who's 86 and he's been doing it for 16 years. This is a long term position."

This year, McTavish began working in malls. "I'm developing my Santa business just like I developed my real estate business."

It's harder work than parties and parades: the days are long and often run late (McTavish likes to rise early so he's beat by 8 p.m.).

And, surprisingly, his business experience helps with his new job. "I was trained in retail where I learned you have to treat the customer with incredible respect."

He often spoke in front of crowds for his job and he doesn't get stage fright.

At parties, he roams the room chatting with kids and adults, making sure everyone's happy. For parades (where he wears good quality long underwear), it's the most fun when he has a mike and can chat with the crowd.

PHOTO SUBMITTED

Bob McTavish in his Santa suit

At the village and at malls, it's all about one-on-one chats with kids, getting them to talk about what they want, what they're interested in, and getting into casual chats about cookies, Mrs. Claus and reindeer.

Diane Peters once hawked magic pens at the Canadian National Exhibition. She's now a writer and part-time journalism instructor.

The Lowdown

Job title: Santa Claus
Salary: $250 to $500 a day or event
Education/training: There are a few Santa schools in North America, but he learned on the job.
Best Part of the Job: "Individual people, not always kids, who react with their eyes to you. You know someone is taking pleasure from what you're doing."
Worst Part of the Job: "Families who push kids beyond the point they should be pushed."

Nurse numbers up

The number of nurses working in Canada rose by 8.3 per cent between 2004 and last year, a new study indicates.

The report by the Canadian Institute for Health Information, released Friday, said the number of employed nurses reached 341,431.

"We're certainly encouraged by the number," said Rachel Bard, CEO of the Canadian Nurses Association.

"We've always said that nurses do bring solutions to the system, and this is certainly recognizing that nurses are part of the solution in the efforts to meet Canada's complex healthcare challenges."

The rate of growth for registered nurses and licensed practical nurses exceeded the rate of population growth over the past five years, while the registered psychiatric nurse workforce in Western Canada kept pace with population growth, the statistics show.

A positive development is an increase in the number of community health nurses and more nurses working in telehealth, Bard said.

The report said the proportion of registered nurses employed in the community health sector rose from 13.8 per cent in 2004, to 14.2 per cent in 2008

"We all know that we need to shift the locus of care, we need to reach people where they are, so registered nurses play a key role in supporting community and individuals in managing their own health," Bard said in an interview from Ottawa.

The Canadian population is aging, and there is a need to ensure there will be enough nurses to support elderly people in the years to come, she noted..

"You want to balance and really bring some self-sufficiency into the system," she said. "If I look at the number of nursing students that graduated in 2008, it was 9,113, but there's only a net gain of 3,008 nurses due to the retirement of the aging workforce, and people moving we're in the right direction when you look at the numbers, but we still need to be very vigilant in continuing to address it."

The report also found that the number of nurse practitioners rose to 1,626 last year from just 800 in 2004. Nurse practitioners provide care that can goes beyond that of a regular nurse — including diagnosis, ordering and interpreting tests and prescribing drugs and treatment.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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'Bait laptop' program curbing computer thefts at SFU
Simon Fraser University is crediting alarm-rigged laptops placed around the library for reducing computer thefts by over 30 per cent. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Co-worker to Facebook friend

It is one of the most socially awkward situations at the office.

You're talking to your boss or co-worker, when they casually ask to be your friend on Facebook.

You quickly think of the juicy comments posted on your wall, or that photo of you gulping margaritas in a bathing suit. Within seconds, you have to decide between saying 'yes' or finding a way to decline the offer without hurting anyone's feelings (or your chance at a promotion).

Adding co-workers as Facebook friends has its issues.

It has happened regularly to a 28-year-old public relations worker in Winnipeg we'll call Nathalie. She doesn't want her real name used for obvious reasons.

"Your boss doesn't need to see what you're doing on the weekend," she said.

"There are lines and there are boundaries. The only co-workers that are my Facebook friends are people that would be hanging out with me."

The workplace is gaining more of a presence on Facebook, MySpace and other social networking sites. Companies are starting to see value in having a presence on Web 2.0. Many have set up corporate Facebook pages and have let employees know that they can become fans — an action that can make your Facebook page more visible to co-workers.

But should you feel obliged to open your social network page to coworkers? Not necessarily, says one expert.

"It might be prudent to promote collegial relations or to curry favour with the boss by socializing with them ... but you certainly have no obligation to," said Arthur Schafer, a professor at the University of Manitoba's Centre for Professional and Applied Ethics.

Facebook has added new privacy options recently, allowing users to hide individual posts or pictures from specific friends. Of course, even if no one at work can see your Facebook page, they can still find out what's on it. It happened earlier this year to a twenty-something woman we'll call Susan, who also doesn't want her name used.

Susan was upset with what she felt was a lack of security and cleanliness at a community event in Winnipeg. She complained about it on her Facebook page, which is only visible to her 500-odd friends.

As it turns out, one of those friends was an employee of the event's organizers, who are clients of Susan's employer. Word got around and Susan found herself facing a tongue-lashing from her boss.

It raises the question, do employers have the right to discipline workers who slag them, the company or a client in quasi-public areas such as Facebook?

"I would say not, unless it's directly damaging to the company — saying 'This product is fraudulent,' for example," said John Melnyck, who teaches management ethics at the University of Winnipeg's business faculty.

Both professors agree that it is important to remember that anything posted online, even behind strict privacy settings, can make its way into the public sphere.

And that perhaps explains why people are reluctant to open their social networking pages to coworkers or superiors. Melnyck recently conducted an experiment on that front.

He asked students in one of his classes, en masse, to make him a friend on Facebook.

"It was a pretty even split of opinion," Melnyck chuckled. "Some people had no hesitation, other people said 'no way.'"

THE CANADIAN PRESS

College students vent online over strike threat

STRIKE Another looming campus strike, another Facebook backlash.

As 24 community colleges brace for a possible teachers' walkout in January, more than 11,500 students are expressing their fear and anger via the Facebook website, as York University students did last year during their 12-week shutdown.

"We don't want a strike to happen. My sister went to York last year and lost out on a summer job because of that strike," said Humber College's Graeme McNaughton, who created the Facebook group Ontario College Students Against A Strike.

Two days of talks ended Tuesday between Colleges Ontario and the Ontario Public Service Employees' Union, with no plans to resume.

The union, which acts for 9,000 full-time teachers, counsellors and librarians, has set a strike vote for Jan. 13.

A petition on the Facebook group page has collected more than 1,800 signatures calling on both sides to reach a deal without stoppages.

In Facebook discussions, students from Toronto to Sudbury are fretting about how a strike could affect their student loans — "I will lose my apartment where me, my two cats and three-month-old son are living," worries one — as well as graduation dates and retraining for laid-off workers.

"I don't blame students for being angry and frustrated,"
Ted Montgomery, union negotiator

"We're starting to have déjà vu from the last strike, when upset students would call us at 4 a.m." said Tyler Charlebois at the 200,000-strong College Student Alliance.

"With government retraining programs underway at many colleges, a strike could put serious stress on Ontario's economic recovery."

The union says it is fighting for academic freedom and more teacher control of workloads, but it became even more upset in November when the colleges exercised a new right to impose a contract after months of talks failed.

It provides an eight per cent raise over four years. The union wants seven and a half per cent over three years.

"I don't blame students for being angry and frustrated," said union negotiator Ted Montgomery. "But we don't want to go on strike. We're hoping for a settlement."

Ditto, says Rob Savage at Colleges Ontario. "We hope we can negotiate a deal." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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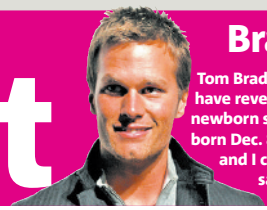
Theron has a new collection

Actress Charlize Theron has launched a new collection of footwear to raise money for impoverished children in her native South Africa. The star debuted her eco-friendly, limited-edition footwear, designed with TOMS Shoes, on Friday. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Entertainment



Brady Bunch

Tom Brady and Giselle Bundchen have revealed the name of their newborn son. Benjamin Brady was born Dec. 8. "Benjamin is a blessing and I could not be happier," Brady said. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Albums of the decade

GRAHAM ROCKINGHAM
for Metro Canada

It was a decade that started with boy bands and Britney, and ended with Bob Dylan singing Here Comes Santa Claus.

In between, an endless stream of over-produced and under-talented American Idol winners managed to keep the big record labels from drowning in a pool of self-inflicted ennui. Yet, through all of this, we managed to find some exceptionally fine music. And you didn't have to be an indie snob to find it. Here are 10 records from the past 10 years that you can feel good about having in your library.

1. Foo Fighters, In Your Honor (2005): A double album shows the band at its best — plugged in and acoustic. It took on the other big double rock album of the decade — Stadium Arcadium by the Red Hot Chili Peppers — and won. With a string of radio friendly rockers like the Best of You and DOA, this is the album that made the Foo Fighters the top band of the decade.

2. Feist, The Reminder (2007): Some critics would place Feist's debut album, Let It Die, above The Reminder. But let's face it, The Reminder put Feist at a higher level. It's also the album that broke the Canadian songstress internationally. It was hard to get tired of 1234, even with the monster abuse it took on those iPod commercials. These are well-crafted songs, written with style and originality, and sung in a uniquely alluring voice.

3. Coldplay, A Rush of Blood to the Head (2003): This is the album that single-handedly saved EMI from disaster (the delay of the release of the follow-up X&Y actually caused a run on EMI stock). The piano riff on Clocks alone makes this album a must. Coldplay started the decade a U2/Radiohead wannabe and reached 2010 well ahead of both.

4. Outkast, Speakerboxxx/The Love Below (2003): This double album's two huge hits — Hey Ya and The Way You Move — finally broke hip hop through to the mainstream pop charts. At the same time, its retro leanings toward funk and soul (a la Sly and the Family Stone) inevitably spelled the end to the genre as we knew it in the '80s and '90s. Melody became as important as the beat. Enter Kanye, Beyoncé and Rihanna.

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ENTERTAINMENT

The Foo Fighters' (frontman Dave Grohl, shown) In Your Honor is one of the albums from the last decade you should own.

5. Arcade Fire, Funeral (2004): Few in Canada were aware of the innovative indie-rock collectives that were thriving in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver until David Bowie stepped on stage with Arcade Fire at a New York gig in 2005. The world seemed to look at the Canadian indie scene differently after that.

6. Amy Winehouse, Back to Black (2006): Sometimes there's a reason why artists sweep the Grammys the way Amy Winehouse did in 2007. This was simply a very good album. How many people can remember exactly where they were when they first heard Rehab on the radio? It was that special. Winehouse managed to reference four decades of R&B music while still sounding original. This album sparked a British retro-fad with a flurry of young Dusty Springfields finding chart success. None, of course, were anywhere near as interesting as Amy.

7. White Stripes, Elephant (2003): Who would have thought that there was anything left to say in rock until Jack White came along and managed to do what others couldn't with nothing but a drum kit, a guitar and a deft hand in the studio. This album proved that less can, indeed, be more. White has since managed to bring a touch of class to everything he touches, including Loretta Lynn's Portland, the Raconteurs and Dead Weather.

8. Sam Roberts, We Were Born in a Flame (2003): It started with a six-song EP (the Inhuman Condition) that cost the Montreal rocker just $65 to record. Two songs (Don't Walk Away Eileen and Brother Down) broke through on radio after every major label in the country turned them down. The three surprise Junos Sam received made us realize that there was more to Canadian rock 'n' roll than the Tragically Hip and Rush.

9. Kanye West, Graduation (2007): OK, he's a jerk. He's proved that over and over again. But sometimes we have to let reality pass and just listen to the music. Kanye's third album brought everything together and made his tremendous ego a little more bearable.

10. Neil Young, Live at Massey Hall 1971 (2007): Yes, this one doesn't really belong. It's a recording of a concert that happened almost 40 years ago. This spot was originally going to be taken by Ryan Adams' Gold (2001), which had a tremendous impact on a whole new breed of singer-songwriters, taking them back to their roots. Neil, however, is the real deal. He is their roots. And nothing had a bigger impact on young writers than the release of this remarkable concert album.

Weekend Box Office

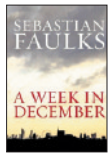
Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theatres:

1. **Avatar:** $73 million US
2. **The Princess and the Frog:** $12.2 million
3. **The Blind Side:** $10 million
4. **Did You Hear About the Morgans:** $7 million
5. **The Twilight Saga: New Moon:** $4.4 million
6. **Invictus:** $4.2 million
7. **Disney's A Christmas Carol:** $3.4 million
8. **Up in the Air:** $3.1 million
9. **Brothers:** $2.6 million
10. **Old Dogs:** $2.3 million

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Trump files for divorce
Ivana Trump was hoping the fourth time would be the charm when it comes to marriage. No such luck. The socialite and former Mrs. Donald filed for divorce Friday from Italian guy Tossano Rubicondi, citing their busy schedules and time apart. **POPEATER.COM**

A journey of uncertainty



Pilgrims

Author: Garrison Keillor
Publisher: Faber & Faber
Price: $24 (Paperback)

SET IN LAKE Wobegon, the town noted American radio personality Garrison Keillor put on the map in his past works Lake Wobegon Days and Lake Wobegon Summer 1956, Pilgrims arrives at a point of uncertainty in Margie and Carl Krebsbach's relationship. In her attempt to conquer their sexual drought, Margie plans a trip to Rome under the pretense of tidying the unkempt grave of a local boy who died there during the city's 1944 liberation. But her travel plans are grounded when a host of colourful locals warm to the idea and want to tag along, foiling her chances for the personal connection she wanted.

A Good Fall

Author: Ha Jin
Publisher: Pantheon
Price: $29.95 (Hardcover)

IN HIS LATEST collection of stories, Chinese author Ha Jin enters the immigrant experience, focusing on Chinese characters in America and their feelings of being torn between two national identities. Children as Enemies follows young people inclined to change their names to appear more "American", to the upset of their grandfather. Immigrants unable to bring their husbands or wives to America are central to In Temporary Love, a story that explores the connection of the divided. Jin's stories are told with precision and passion, presenting stories that hone in on intimate feelings and distress.

A Week in December

Author: Sebastian Faulks
Publisher: Hutchinson
Price: $34.95 (Hardcover)

BRITISH WRITER Sebastian Faulks tries to decongest metropolitan English life in his latest novel, A Week in December. The story is made even more critical by its air of "faction," a work masking real characters and events with fiction. The comical book unfolds during one week in December 2007, and follows a party planning by an MP and his wife. The invited guests — who include high finance heads, a journalist and a football player — bring their stories to the pages. They tie together themes like greed and religious fundamentalism, contrasted with the global financial crisis.

Brian Coulton/for Metro Canada

BookPicks

Gibson retires from ABC News

Gibson

CAREER Considered one way, Charles Gibson's career in TV news seems to be a model of stability: 34 years logged with one employer, ABC. There, he did his job well and rose to the top echelon of his profession, forming a firm bond with his viewers and offering his gracious signoff, "I hope you had a good day."

On the other hand, Gibson, who retired Friday from the World News anchor desk and from ABC as a full-time employee, is bowing out as more than an admired network news star. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Entertainment in brief

LEGAL Rapper Lil Wayne and 11 people travelling with him were briefly detained Friday night after U.S. Border Patrol officers found marijuana on two of his tour buses, authorities said. Lil Wayne, whose real name is Dwayne Carter, and the others were questioned and released, according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and the case was referred to the Brooks County Sheriff's Office. The tour buses were stopped in Falfurrias, about 80 miles southwest of Corpus Christi, where the rapper is scheduled to perform Sunday night. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

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In brief

TECHNOLOGY Hackers briefly blocked access to the popular Internet messaging service Twitter overnight, steering traffic to another website where a group reportedly calling itself the "Iranian Cyber Army"' claimed responsibility.
Users trying to reach Twitter early Friday were redirected to a webpage that CNN reported had a picture of a green flag and a message that said, "This site has been hacked by the Iranian Cyber Army."

FILM Captain EO is moonwalking back to Disneyland. The theme park announced plans Friday to bring back the 3-D sci-fi film starring Michael Jackson next February, over 23 years after the attraction debuted in Anaheim, Calif. The 17-minute film starred the late King of Pop as a singing-and-dancing intergalactic commander. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Kenya's Style
Kenya Hunt
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VA	Vu	SC	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime 12/21/09	251	308	3 CBC	Wheel Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Just for Laughs "Best Of" (N)		The Hour Holiday Special (N)		CBC News: The National (N)		(:05) The Hour
	254	-	9 OMNI	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Omni News: Mandarin Edition		News: Cantonese Edition		Omni News: Punjabi Edition		The Simpsons
	250	321	9 CTV	Paradise City: Degrassi Goes Hollywood (2009) (CC) (DVS)				Two/Half Men	Big Bang Th	CSI: Miami "Dead on Arrival"		CTV News
	-	-	10 JOY	Frasier (CC)	The Insider	Daily Weekend Edition (CC)		Poltergeist: The Legacy		P3	Ek Noor	New Day
	252	336	11 GTV	Entertainment	ET Canada	House "Epic Fail" (PA) (CC)		Lie to Me "The Core of It"		Holmes in New Orleans (CC)		News
	256	389	12 VI	Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye		Rita MacNeil's Cape Breton		Gossip Girl "The Freshman"		Stargate Atlantis "Instinct"		A News (N)
	253	359	13 CITY	Murdoch Mysteries "Power"		How I Met	Accidentally	Mercy (CC)		The Jay Leno Show (N) (CC)		The CityNews
	-	-	14 CW	The Office	The Office	One Tree Hill (CC)		Gossip Girl "The Freshman"		Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Frasier (CC)
	289	381	15 CBS	Entertainment	The Insider	How I Met	Accidentally	Two/Half Men	Big Bang Th	CSI: Miami "Dead on Arrival"		KIRO 7 News
	287	379	16 NBC	Evening Mag.	Inside Edition	The Sing-Off "The Finale" The winning group is revealed.				The Jay Leno Show (N) (CC)		KING 5 News
	602	568	19 W	Borrowed Hearts (1997) Roma Downey, Eric McCormack.				Eve's Christmas (2004) Elisa Donovan, Cheryl Ladd.				Maxed Out
	288	380	24 ABC	Wheel Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	I Want a Dog for Christmas		Find My Family (N) (CC)		Castle "Vampire Weekend"		KOMO 4 News
	-	-	28 KVOS	M*A*S*H	Seinfeld	Pie in the Sky ★★ (1995) Josh Charles, Anne Heche.				Seinfeld	King	Cheers (CC)
	291	383	27 PBS	Conver-KCTS	Antiques	Antiques Roadshow (N) (CC)		Frontline "From Jesus to Christ: The First Christians" (CC)				Voces (CC)
	290	382	23 FOX	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	House "Epic Fail" (PA) (CC)		Lie to Me "The Core of It"		Q13 FOX News at Ten (N)		Family Guy
	-	364	43 PBS	The People V. Leo Frank (CC) (DVS)			TBA	Tavis Smiley	Charlie Rose (N) (CC)		Antiques Roadshow (CC)	
	296	654	34 SBK	The Office	Name Is Earl	Frasier (CC)	'70s Show	South Park	Half & Half	Paid Program	Hatchett	Paid Program
	298	653	35 TLA	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	One Tree Hill (CC)		Gossip Girl "The Freshman"		KTLA Prime News (N) (CC)		Friends (CC)
	295	651	36 WGN	WGN News at Nine (N) (CC)		Family Guy	Two/Half Men	According-Jim	Friends (CC)	Friends (CC)	Maury (CC)	
	297	652	37 WPX	PIX News at Ten Tong. (N)		Two/Half Men	Friends (CC)	Friends (CC)	According-Jim	Family Guy	South Park	Scrubs (CC)
	199	311	76 STR	CTV News	NTV Latenight News		Late Show W/Letterman		Late Late Show/Ferguson		Inside Edition	Seinfeld
news	502	390	28 NW	The Life of JK Rowling (CC)		CBC News: The National (N)		CBC News: The National (N)		The Life of JK Rowling (CC)		National
	500	500	33 CNN	Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)				Larry King Live		Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)		Cooper 360
sports	407	419	22 RSP	Vancouver	UEFA Champ.	Hockey	Beach Voll.	UFC: Access	MMA Conn	Sportsnet Connected (Live)		Sportsnet
	400	400	30 TSN	NFL Football: Giants at Redskins			SportsCentre (Live) (CC)		World Poker Tour: Season 7		Strength	SportsCentre
	411	457	49 OLN	Ghost Hunters (CC)		Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Survivorman (CC)		Ghost Hunters (CC)		Bounty Hunter
	410	403	54 SCR	WWE Monday Night RAW		Score Now	Score Now	WWE Monday Night RAW With Michael Cole and Jerry Lawler.				Cabby Unlimit
	417	406	55 SC	Barrett-Jackson		Car Crazy	Pass Time	SuperCars	SuperCars	Barrett-Jackson		Auctions
	416	409	144 GLF	(6:00) Fútbol Brasileño		Off the Pitch	Gol TV News	Off the Pitch	Game Cap	Paid Program	Gol TV News	Gol TV News
family	552	543	25 YTV	Merry Christmas		Scrooged ★★★ (1988) Bill Murray, Karen Allen. (CC)				Family Biz	Prank Patrol	Adrenaline
	555	545	50 TEL	Jack Frost ★★ (1998) Michael Keaton, Kelly Preston. (CC)				Futurama	King of Hill	American Dad	Futurama	Chicken
	557	541	51 FAM	Sonny Chance	Zack & Cody	Overruled!	Han. Montana	Wizards-Place	Latest Buzz	Ned's School	Cory in House	That's-Raven
	553	546	53 TRE	A Very Fairy Christmas		Max & Ruby	Dragon	Backyard	Ni Hao	Go, Diego, Go!	Franklin	Comfy Couch
cable variety	268	354	5 KNO	Recreat. Eden	Landscape	Monarchy (N) (CC)		Glowing in the Dark (N) (CC)		Stolen Babies, Stolen Lives		Christmas
	575	583	20 CMT	Home Imp.	Home Imp.	Live & Up Front: Doc Walker		Snow 2 Brain Freeze (2008) Tom Cavanagh, Ashley Williams.				Home Imp.
	570	580	42 MM	So You Think You Can Dance		MuchOnDemand (CC)		House	Selena Gomez	So You Think You Can Dance		Dance
	600	564	48 H&G	House	House	Holmes on Homes (CC)		House Poor	Income Prop.	For Rent	My First Place	House
	615	520	61 A&E	Hoarders "Bob and Richard"		Hoarders "Judi and Gail"		(:01) Intervention "John C."		(:01) Intervention "Rob"		(:01) Hoarders
	628	584	62 SPKE	(6:00) Forest Gump ★★★ (1994) Tom Hanks, Robin Wright.				Real Vice	Real Vice	Real Vice	Real Vice	Real Vice
	521	560	64 TLC	World Chocolate		Little People	Little People	Little Chocolatiers (CC)		World Chocolate		Little People
	616	522	65 SHO	The Outer Limits (CC)		His and Her Christmas (2005) Paula Devicq, Dina Meyer. (CC)				Bones (CC)		NCIS (CC)
	620	523	40 BVO	Yo-Yo Ma		Law & Order "Kids" (CC)		Without a Trace "True/False"		The Broken Hearts Club ★★ (2000) (CC)		
	601	562	41 SLC	Plastic Makes	Plastic-Perfect	ET Canada	Whatever	Work Out (CC)		Brat Camp (CC)		Runway
	520	505	42 DIS	Man vs. Wild "Namibia"		Daily Planet (CC)		MythBusters (CC)		Man vs. Wild "Namibia"		Dirty Jobs
	522	506	44 HIS	Convoy: War of the Atlantic		Patton 360 (CC)		Battles BC (CC)		The Lost Book of Nostradamus (CC)		
	627	528	45 SPC	(6:00) Sea Ghost (2004)		Stargate SG-1 (CC)		Star Trek: Next Gener.		Star Trek: Voyager (CC)		Sea Ghost
	294	650	47 TBS	Family Guy	Family Guy	Lopez Tonight		Name Is Earl	Name Is Earl	Sex and-City	Sex and-City	Lopez Tonight
	619	525	48 TROP	Raymond	Raymond	The Outer Limits (CC)		ET Canada	Comeback	Family Guy	Raymond	Raymond
	603	561	52 FN	Dinner: Impossible (CC)		Iron Chef America (CC)		Unwrapped Holiday favorites.		Top Chef: Las Vegas (CC)		Dinner
	-	-	53 AMC	Christmas	Holiday Inn ★★★ (1942) Bing Crosby, Fred Astaire.					(:45) Christmas Eve ★★ (1947) George Raft. (CC)		
	626	547	57 COM	Air Farce	22 Minutes	Corner Gas	22 Minutes	The Simpsons	South Park	To Be Announced		Daily Show
	320	621	60 CEN	(6:15) Righteous Kill ★★ (CC)		Dexter "Living the Dream"		Californication	My Best Friend's Girl ★ (2008) Dane Cook.			Stran Wild
	581	566	101 MTV	Super Sweet	Teen Cribs	MTV Live	MTV News	MTV Cribs	MTV Cribs	Super Sweet	Teen Cribs	MTV Live
	261	394	102 V	(6:00) Miracle of the Heart		Tabernacle	Mormon-Choir	Miracle of the Heart (2005, Drama) Neil Patrick Harris.				My Husband
	-	-	105 MUL	Sewing Maid	Boys Over Flo	State Secret		To Be Announced		Pinoy: That's Entertainment		Patrol World

critics'corner

Paradise City: Degrassi Goes Hollywood
Kevin Smith ("Clerks") channels his inner "Degrassi" fan in a big way in this 2009 TV movie, in which his filmmaking partner Jason Mewes is casting a "High School Musical"-type movie based on his own teen years. When Kevin recommends Manny Santos (Cassie Steele) for the lead, the "Degrassi" gang hits the road for Hollywood and a reunion with Paige (Lauren Collins), who's also up for the part. 7 PM on CTV

The Hour Holiday Special
Running out of holiday spirit? This tuneful special might provide a refill. Hosted by George Stroumboulopoulos, it features performances by Michael Buble, Our Lady Peace, Metric with the choir Carol of the Bells, Jim Cuddy and Greg Keelor of Blue Rodeo, Kathleen Edwards, and Anvil, among others. Pour yourself some eggnog and enjoy. 9 PM on CBC

Knowles' parents file for divorce

Tina Knowles filed for divorce from Mathew Knowles in November, a source close to the showbiz family confirms to usmagazine.com recently. The parents to Beyonce and Solange Knowles have been married for 29 years. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity Buzz

Pattinson and Stewart spotted in Venice Beach

DINING OUT Robert Pattinson and Kristen Stewart failed to go unnoticed recently when they headed out to enjoy a nice dinner together in Los Angeles' Venice Beach neighborhood.

"It looked like they were on a nice stroll through the neighborhood," a source tells E! News. "They seemed really just into hanging together. They weren't holding hands, but were really sweet with each other."

METRO WORLD NEWS

Jonas brother Kevin gets hitched at swanky estate

ISN'T THAT SWEET? In a setting fit for a Disney prince and his princess, Kevin Jonas married Danielle Deleasa Saturday night at Oheka Castle, a turn-of-the-century French-style chateau, on a sprawling estate in Long Island, people.com reports.

"We're so happy that we're finally married and we were able to share the special moment with family, friends and loved ones," the couple tells People.

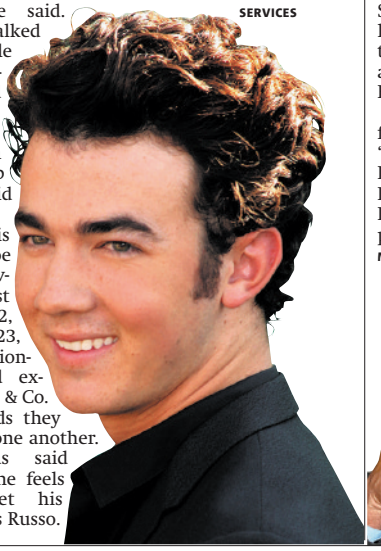
Though a blizzard threatened the festivities, the wedding attended by 400 family members and friends, including Demi Lovato, went forward as scheduled.

"The snow only made it look more like a winter wonderland," said Michael Russo, a celebrity event planner of Roses-n-Lollipops, who for Saturday's event created a fairy-tale forest under heated white tents, complete with 14-foot trees draped in hydrangeas and crystals made to look like icicles.

"Danielle looked like a princess," he said. When she walked down the aisle in her strapless tulle and Chantilly lace Vera Wang gown, "Kevin couldn't stop smiling," said Russo.

With his brothers, Joe and Nick serving as his best men, Kevin, 22, and Danielle, 23, recited traditional vows and exchanged Jacob & Co. wedding bands they designed for one another.

"Kevin has said many times he feels like he met his princess," says Russo. "To see them together you can feel the warmth and the love all around them. They are just perfect for each other." METRO NEWS SERVICES



Michael Lohan wants better pals for Lindsay

BECAUSE HE HAS SET SUCH A STELLAR EXAMPLE Michael Lohan hopes that a higher class of friends is just the thing daughter Lindsay Lohan needs to keep her on the straight and narrow. So Lindsay being spotted last week at the same party as Leonardo DiCaprio is a good thing, he tells Hollyscoop.

"They have been friends for years," Michael says. "Mark Wahlberg, Robert Downey Jr., Leonardo DiCaprio and a few others. I think they have a lot of positive things to offer."

METRO WORLD NEWS

Celebrity tweets

Stan Lee likes to brag, Jordin Sparks is not enjoying winter, Joel McHale gives you detailed updates, and Russell Simmons is aiming higher.

- @smilinstanlee So far I've taken pix with 3 presidents, Clinton, Reagan and Bush. I often wonder how this country could ever have run without me.
- @TheRealJordin I hate the cold. And I have a cold. Ha. A cold in the cold. Great. Soup time!
- @joelmchale There's a woman placing Korean food in front of me right now.
- @UncleRUSH Yogis believe the ultimate payoff "heaven"can be realized on earth. This enlightenment is your birthrite .

METRO WORLD NEWS

Water park upsets neighbours

HER PARK WILL GO ON Celine Dion has upset neighbours over plans to build a water park in her home, femalefirst.co.uk reports. The 41-year-old singer has reportedly enraged local residents who are less than impressed with her vision for the new addition to her $12.5 million property.

A source said: "There will be two giant pools, several waterslides and a lazy river, much like an amusement park." While Dion's eight-year-old son Rene-Charles and the rest of her extended family might be happy, some of the neighbours have made it quite clear they're not happy with her plans.

A local resident told the National Enquirer magazine: "It's totally distasteful and demeans the whole area."

METRO WORLD NEWS

Divorce papers filed

SPLITSVILLE Three months after announcing their separation, Deane Sheremet has filed for divorce from country star LeAnn Rimes, according to Los Angeles court papers people.com reports. Sheremet cites "irreconcilable differences" for the end of their nearly eight-year marriage, which crumbled when Rimes began a relationship with actor Eddie Cibrian, who also was married at the time to Brandi Glanville (Cibrian and Glanville are also divorcing.)

Sheremet, 29, is seeking spousal support from Rimes, 27, and wants her to pay the attorney fees, according to the papers, which were filed Thursday in Superior Court. The pair have no children.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Jacko tribute scrapped

ONCE AGAIN Jermaine Jackson's global tribute to his late brother Michael has been scrapped for the second time, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

Organizers at World Awards Media, led by the King of Pop's older brother, cancelled a Vienna, Austri, concert in September after struggling to secure stars to perform at the event. The show was rescheduled for London next summer.

The latter concert appeared to be in trouble after an executive decision to dissolve the company behind the project was made last month. Martin Schneider, liquidator for the organizers, said: "The company cannot sign any new contracts and will certainly not plan any new events."

Now Jermaine Jackson has declined to forge ahead with the show, which was to initially feature Mary J. Blige, Chris Brown and veteran singer Natalie Cole.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Zap Zits

The Pimple Healer (Mario Badescu) dries out pimples overnight and helps prevent breakouts.

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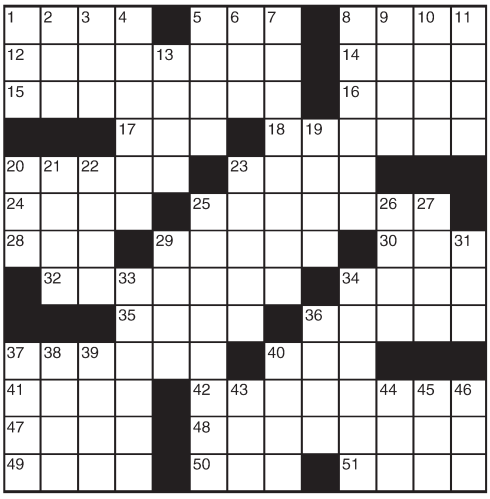
Take Five



1 Pinza of "South Pacific"
5 "Give — break!"
8 Dweeby type
12 "The View" co-host
14 Old Italian money
15 Source of great wealth
16 Press
17 — Bon Jovi
18 Most recent
20 For a specific purpose
23 Platter
24 Nitwit
25 Tennessee city
28 Right angle
29 Funnyman Jerry
30 Medic, familiarly
32 Compose in print
34 Medal earner
35 Wan
36 Substantial
37 Where originally located
40 Motorists' org.
41 Crucifix
42 Yukon event
47 African antelope
48 Report-card sticker, maybe
49 Break suddenly
50 Computer file suffix
51 Danson et al.

DOWN

1 Early bird?
2 Menagerie
3 Under the weather
4 Goldfinger ally
5 Chicken chow —
6 Compass point suffix
7 "18 or older" provision
8 Snafu
9 Ireland
10 Greek Cupid
11 Philosopher Immanuel
13 University VIP
19 Poisonous snakes
20 Mr. Lincoln
21 Foolish one
22 Sacred
23 One of Donald Duck's nephews
25 Crazy, in Yiddish
26 Concept
27 Kind
29 For fear that
31 Coquettish
33 Settled a debt
34 "Citizen Kane" inspiration
36 Anti-DUI org.
37 Annoys
38 Verb counterpart
39 Carbonated drink
40 "— Well That Ends Well"
43 "Alley- —!"
44 Multipurpose truck
45 Despondent
46 Day fractions (Abbr.)

Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

		3				8		
		6	9		4	7		
9				2				1
	8	9	6		2	1	7	
	7	2	5		1	3	4	
8				7				2
		7	3		9	5		
		1				6		

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

A	B	S	■	C	L	A	W	■
D	A	Y	■	O	A	T	H	■
S	Y	N	O	N	Y	M	Y	■
■	■	D	Y	E	S	■	■	■
A	C	R	E	S	■	M	I	C
B	O	O	R	■	S	I	G	H
L	A	M	■	C	A	N	O	E
E	X	E	C	U	T	O	R	■
■	■	■	U	S	E	R	■	S
R	O	A	R	S	■	■	S	T
A	V	I	V	■	S	Y	N	O
M	A	D	E	■	H	E	I	R
S	L	E	D	■	E	S	P	Y

R	O	M	E	■	■	■	■	■
E	V	I	L	■	■	■	■	■
H	E	M	S	■	■	■	■	■
A	E	R	I	E	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	A	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	E	■	■	■	■
Y	M	A	■	■	■	■	■	■
K	N	I	T	■	■	■	■	■
S	E	A	T	S	■	■	■	■
T	E	P	■	■	■	■	■	■
S	I	S	■	■	■	■	■	■
E	L	K	■	■	■	■	■	■
S	L	Y	■	■	■	■	■	■

2	5	4	3	9	1	6	7	8
6	1	8	4	7	5	2	3	9
7	9	3	2	8	6	4	1	5
1	2	6	9	4	3	8	5	7
8	3	5	7	1	2	9	4	6
4	7	9	6	5	8	3	2	1
3	6	7	5	2	9	1	8	4
5	8	2	1	6	4	7	9	3
9	4	1	8	3	7	5	6	2

On the web

For more games and 60 additional daily cartoon strips, visit metronews.ca

Metro Recipe of the Day

Baked Rosemary Monkfish

INGREDIENTS:
1 Tbsp (15 mL) olive oil
Two 1/2 lb (250 g) monkfish fillets (membrane removed)
2 garlic cloves, quartered
2 fresh rosemary sprigs, broken up
1 lime
2 Tbsp (25 mL) butter
4 tomatoes, halved

METHOD:
1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Cut two pieces of foil, each large enough to enclose a piece of monkfish. Brush foil with a little oil.
2. Put one monkfish fillet on each piece of foil. Make small slits all over fish. Push garlic pieces and rosemary sprigs into slits.
3. Grate lime zest over fish. Trim off lime ends, then cut into four thick slices. Squeeze some drops of lime juice over fish, then lay slices on top of fillets. Dot with butter and season to taste.
4. Put tomatoes, cut side up, alongside fish. Fold up foil to enclose fish and tomatoes and seal edges.
5. Put parcels on baking tray and bake 10 minutes. Open foil and bake until fish is opaque and cooked through. Test with point of knife. Cut each piece of fish in half and transfer to plates with tomatoes. Pour over juices from parcels and serve.

SERVES 4

rd.ca
For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to rd.ca or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton sallybrompton.com

For Sally's expanded daily and weekend horoscopes, visit metronews.ca

ARIES ♈
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
You will totally disagree with what you are told today. You can't take seriously something that is so outrageous.

TAURUS ♉
APRIL 21-MAY 21
According to the planets you are expecting too much of yourself and must adjust your ambitions to a more reasonable level.

GEMINI ♊
MAY 22-JUNE 21
Don't waste time on petty arguments. You should be channeling your energy in productive directions, not debating issues of no real importance.

CANCER ♋
JUNE 22-JULY 22
You will have to make some kind of financial adjustment over the next 24 hours, most likely because you have bitten off more than you can chew.

LEO ♌
JULY 23-AUG 23
If you embellish the truth in any way, shape or form you will almost certainly be found out – and that could be embarrassing later in the week.

VIRGO ♍
AUG 24-SEPT 22
Try not to provoke an argument or confrontation today because it is unlikely to go in your favor.

LIBRA ♎
SEPT 23-OCT 23
Is something you thought was as real as it comes an illusion after all? That is the question you will be asking yourself today.

SCORPIO ♏
OCT 24-NOV 22
Listen to what others have to tell you today but don't think you have to think or do as they say.

SAGITTARIUS ♐
NOV 23-DEC 21
With Jupiter, your ruler, aspecting Neptune, planet of illusion, today you will find it hard to make up your mind about what you should be doing.

CAPRICORN ♑
DEC 22-JAN 20
You will have some wonderful ideas and insights as the new week begins but don't be too eager to put them to the test because this is a time for thinking.

AQUARIUS ♒
JAN 21-FEB 18
Cosmic activity in and around your birth sign means there will be so much going on in your world that you find it hard to get your head around it.

PISCES ♓
FEB 19-MARCH 20
Try not to take your doubts and fears too seriously – they are no more than negative manifestations of your over-active imagination.

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